

REMARKS

Initially, in the Office Action dated January 3, 2005, the Examiner rejects claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,895,450 (Sloo) and further in view of "'No Problem' Problem Tracking" © 1993 ACM (Kanter et al.).

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 remain pending in the present application.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sloo in view of Kanter et al. Applicants have discussed the deficiencies of Sloo in Applicants' previously-filed response and reassert all arguments submitted in that response. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and provide the following additional remarks.

Kanter et al. discloses a system including a database for tracking and managing network problems that includes the use of problem tickets. Users are allowed to view and update tickets in a database and keep tickets in a priority order so that the most recent tickets are at the top of the list. A problem ticket process is initiated when a user answers a call. Information is obtained to determine if the caller is reporting a network problem, requesting information, or initiating a work order. The user then enters the appropriate information and the ticket is assigned to a particular group for handling. Any activity for the ticket is recorded on the ticket with the most recent entries at the top. Once the problem is resolved, the ticket is closed after contacting the original caller.

The Examiner appears to have asserted the exact same arguments in support of the rejections using Sloo that were asserted in the previous Office Action, but has not addressed Applicants arguments concerning Sloo. The only change in the current Office Action appears to be that the Examiner now asserts that Kanter et al. discloses Applicants' claimed "ticket management apparatus."

Regarding claims 1, 5 and 6, Applicants submit that neither Sloo nor Kanter et al., taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of these claims of, inter alia, transmitting personal information on a sending party identified by a ticket information from a ticket management processing apparatus to a deliberation support processing apparatus when the deliberation result indicates that the sent-out contents includes an illegality. As has been noted previously, Sloo merely discloses that a complaint is sent from a complainant to a subject thereby to settle a dispute. Sloo discloses that the dispute can be settled if the complainant knows the whereabouts (e.g., a name, address, etc.) of the subject. In contrast, the limitations in the claims of the present application relate to a system for resolving a dispute which has occurred based on a complaint against a libel/slander message (corresponding to "sent-out contents" in the claims) written onto a homepage (i.e., "capable of being browsed on a provider side processing apparatus"). According to the present invention, the deliberation of the dispute continues while maintaining anonymity of a user who wrote the message, and that only if the complainant is true and the message includes illegality is

personal information of the user who wrote the message disclosed. Sloo discloses the subject being known to the complainant (see col. 5, lines 10-20).

The Examiner asserts that Sloo discloses accepting an input for designating sent-out contents capable of being browsed on a provider side processing apparatus connected via network at col. 3, lines 5-20. However, these portions of Sloo merely disclose that subjects may be any responsible person or entity, the hardware associated with the Sloo system, and that access terminals receive complaints and responses from users, deliver them to the central computer and receive transmissions from the central computer. These portions of Sloo do not disclose or suggest anything related to a provider side processing apparatus connected to a network, or accepting an input designating sent-out contents, capable of being browsed, as recited in the claims of the present application. These portions of Sloo do not disclose or suggest anything related to a browser, as recited in the claims of the present application.

Moreover, the Examiner asserts that Sloo discloses transmitting personal information on a sending party identified by information from a management processing apparatus to the deliberation support processing apparatus, and transmitting the deliberation results stored in the deliberation managing database and the personal information on the sending party received from the ticket management processing apparatus from the deliberation support processing apparatus to the deliberation requesting party side processing apparatus, at col. 9, lines 5-15. However, these portions of Sloo are not related at all to these limitations

in the claims of the present application. This portion of Sloo merely discloses that a subject that prevails in the dispute may have a rating increased if the party prevailed against has a good reputation and may have a rating increased to a lesser amount if the prevailed against party has a poorer reputation, and that program notifies the complainant and subject of the judgment, and that the performance of a judge and jurors may be monitored and stored. These portions of Sloo do not disclose or suggest transmitting personal information on a sending party identified by a ticket information from a ticket management processing apparatus to a deliberation support processing apparatus when the deliberation result indicates that the sent-out contents include an illegality, or transmitting the deliberation results stored in a deliberation managing database, as recited in the claims of the present application.

These portions of Sloo merely relate to a rating given to a subject who prevails over a party based on the rating of the party. These portions of Sloo do not disclose or suggest anything related to personal information of a sending party identified by ticket information or transmitting personal information if the sent-out contents include an illegality.

The Examiner admits that Sloo does not disclose or suggest "ticket management apparatus", but asserts that Kanter et al. discloses this limitation in the abstract, second paragraph. However, as noted previously, the ticket referred to in Kanter et al. relates to networking problems. Kanter et al. discloses a problem ticket database system for managing problems on the California State University network (CSUnet). The ticket disclosed in Kanter et al. is used for a database product called

“File Maker Pro” to manage problems occurring on the CSUnet. Kanter et al.’s system allows a staff to write a problem such as a network failure together with his/her contact address on a “ticket” provided in the database. A staff of the network support center (NSC) then writes the status of a countermeasure activity to the problem on the corresponding “ticket”, so that everyone can read a history of solutions for the network problems recorded. This is not ticket information for identifying a sending-party sending out designated sent-out contents, from a provider-side processing apparatus, as recited in the claims of the present application. Further, the cited portions of Kanter et al. do not disclose or suggest a ticket management processing apparatus, or specifically transmitting personal information on a sending party identified by a ticket information from a ticket management processing apparatus to a deliberation support processing apparatus when the deliberation result indicates that the sent-out contents includes an illegality, as recited in the claims of the present application. The limitations in the claims of the present application relate to a means for resolving a dispute without disclosing personal information of parties concerned. Issuance of a “ticket” for identifying an information center and management means is constituted by only information by which a person cannot be identified. Further, since Applicants’ “ticket” is issued only by a ticket issuer (reliable organization), it is impossible for a third party to uniquely specify the information sender. Therefore, according to the present invention, a dispute can be resolved while assuring high anonymity by avoiding a risk which will be caused by the disclosure of personal information as to the parties concerned. In

contrast, Kanter et al. discloses that every staff can create a ticket and read every ticket, therefore there is absolutely no anonymity. Further, Kanter et al. fails to disclose or suggest to use a ticket as a means for resolving a dispute occurring between parties due to information such as a libel, a slander, etc (i.e., an illegality).

Moreover, Applicants submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would have no motivation to combine Sloo, that relates to a computer program for automatically handling and resolving user complaints against subjects, with Kanter et al., that relates to using tickets to track networking problems. These two disclosures are from totally different subject areas and have no relationship with each other. Accordingly, Applicants submit that one of ordinary skill in the art would have no motivation to combine these two references in an attempt to achieve the limitations in the claims of the present application. Further, as has been noted, this combination fails to achieve the limitations in the claims of the present application.

Regarding claim 2, Applicants submit that this claim is dependent on independent claim 1 and, therefore, is patentable at least for the same reasons noted regarding this independent claim. For example, Applicants submit that none of the cited references disclose or suggest accepting an input of inquiry contents towards a sending party to store the inquiry contents into a deliberation managing database, transmitting the inquiry contents and the ticket information stored in the deliberation management database to a ticket management processing apparatus, or making reference to a mail address indicated by a content address included in the

personal information identified by the ticket information and transmitting the inquiry contents from the ticket management processing apparatus to the mail address.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that neither Sloo nor Kanter et al., taken alone or in any proper combination, disclose, suggest or render obvious the limitations in the combination of each of claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 of the present application. Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Mattingly, Stanger & Malur, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (referencing attorney docket no. 500.40756X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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